

Summary

The aim of this work is to analyze shark as a cultural concept. From cultural point of view, we are able to look at the shark as a pattern, which is always changing in time and environment, in other words, sharks are not only sea species but also creatures holding symbol of meaning. In many world cultures, shark became a symbol of many meanings. Using the system analysis approach, I will attempt to describe the shark from different point of view of Human sciences. First of all I will make a research about shark as a biological part and its importance and indispensableness in perfectly balanced ocean life. Including possible consequences of losing this fascinating creature by exterminating it. From biological and ecological outlook I will move to socio-cultural and symbolical part, which I comprehend as a pivotal point in this research as whole. This chapter is dedicated to the question of overall negative perception of sharks by people. Among other topics, I will also attempt to describe symbolical meaning of sharks in Pacific cultures and compare with its role in western culture.

Media and its influence on general perception of sharks will be the subject of the following chapter. Media are powerful tool for shaping the public opinion, it is a fact. As Winston Churchill said – “There is no public opinion, there is only published opinion”.

The reason why sharks evoke mainly negative feelings and emotions is concededly the manner how media present sharks in general. Essentially, media business is based on increasing revenues by creating and publishing sensational news. As well as it was money, being behind the significant change of perception of sharks after presenting JAWS, the movie. Among others, this chapter will also include some observations related to this movie and its crucial role in changing the perception of sharks in the eyes of general public.

Last but not least, I will attempt to investigate ethical relation between man and shark in detail. Yes, it is natural and right to fear sharks, because they really do attack people. On the other hand, people slaughter hundreds of thousands of sharks in a cruel and ruthless way. For instance by sawing shark's fins alive. This way of hunting and killing is mainly caused by the huge demand in Asian markets. Sharks' fins and liver are considered a delicacy and belong among the key ingredients of traditional Chinese and Japanese medicine. This demand is one of the main reasons of why some shark kinds are near to extermination.